

regard to them. But it must be perfectly obvious that as time goes on, the character of a neighbourhood must change and the restrictions become quite obsolete. One has only to observe the numberless private houses being converted into shops to see that a restriction against land being used for any other but private houses must restrict the normal development of a district.

This was at length appreciated by our lawgivers, and sect. 84 of the Law of Property Act, 1925, empowered the official arbitrators (originally appointed for the purposes of the Acquisition of Land (Assessment of Compensation) Act, 1919) to modify such restrictions in individual cases where such restrictions impeded the reasonable use of the land.

The person applying to be relieved has to make a formal application to the official arbitrator, setting out the grounds of the application, the application has to be advertised in the local newspaper, and if any objection is received, the arbitrator has to hold an enquiry—for which the applicant desiring removal of the restriction has usually to pay.

The application for removal of restrictions is not very often made—partly on the ground of trouble and expense, but if it costs £50, and the value of the

land increases £100 in value because of the withdrawal of the restriction—it is probably worth while. It must be remembered, on the other hand, that if a person ignores a restrictive covenant—it is only in a substantial case that his neighbours will apply to the Court to restrain him from his act—and that if any such proceedings are taken against him, he can apply to the Court to stay the proceedings while he approaches the official arbitrator to discharge the restriction.